



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**BORDER PATROL AGENT ADMITS TO FRAUDULENT FIREARM PURCHASE  
AND POSSESSION OF UNREGISTERED FIREARMS**

**U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton** announced today that Border Patrol agent Franklin L. Sherren, III, faces up to ten years in federal prison after pleading guilty to four federal firearms charges.

Appearing before United States District Judge Alia Ludlum in Del Rio, Texas, this afternoon, Sherren pleaded guilty to one count of making a false statement during a firearm purchase and three counts of possession of unregistered firearms.

Sherren admitted that on November 10, 2005, he purchased a Walther .40 caliber pistol and ammunition from licensed firearm dealer in Del Rio. During the transaction, Sherren falsely claimed on ATF Form 4473 that he was the actual buyer of the firearm when, in fact, he "straw purchased" the firearm. After making the purchase, he gave the firearm and the ammunition to Ismael Maltos Romo, an individual he knew was an alien admitted into the United States under a non-immigrant visa.

Sherren also admitted that he illegally possessed a firearms silencer, 9mm caliber machine gun and a sawed-off shotgun not registered to him in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record. On April 7, 2006, agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement together with deputy United States Marshals recovered the items during the execution of a search warrant at the defendant's residence.

Sherren remains in federal custody. Sentencing is expected to occur within the next 60-90 days.

This case is being investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives together with the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General and the United States Marshals Service. Assistant United States Attorney Robert J. Brady, Jr., is prosecuting this case for the government.

The prosecution of this case is another example of how the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas is carrying out the Department of Justice's gun crime initiative - Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide federal initiative designed to reduce gun violence in our communities. PSN promotes partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement to target criminals in possession of guns. Federal law insures that when an armed criminal is arrested, that individual will face swift criminal prosecution and be exiled from the community through the use of stiff mandatory prison sentences.

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